to banks for assisting employees in acquiring shares of their employer companies out of the quota reserved for subscription by employees, no separate instructions have been issued by them for granting advances to investors in general proposing to subscribe to right shares.

**Export price of cotton**

3514. SHRI KAMAL MORARKA: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the minimum export price in respect of export of cotton still continues or the same has since been withdrawn;

(b) whether any relaxation has been announced in the export procedure; and

(c) if so, what are the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI RAFIQUE ALAM): (a) to (c) The procedure for *interse* allocation of the export quota released to the private trade has been revised so that interse allocations are made on the basis of the highest unit value realisation quoted by the applicants in their applications submitted in sealed tenders. In view of the above procedure, the fixation of minimum export prices in respect of quotas allotted to the private trade has been dispensed with. Exports by public sector agencies, however, will continue to be subject to minimum export prices.

**Advances made under the Differential Rates of Interest Scheme**

3515. SHRI KAMAL MORARKA: the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) what are the total advances made under the Differential Rates of Interest Scheme so far; and

(b) how much of this is at four percent interest rate?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AFFAIRS IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO): (a) Reserve Bank of India has reported that the total outstanding advances of public sector banks as at the end of December, 1988 under Differential Rate of Interest Scheme were Rs. 646.58 crores.

(b) The entire amount advanced under the scheme carries a rate of interest of 4 per cent annum.

**Development of Wasteland**

3516. SHRI KAMAL MORARKA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) what is the total wasteland in the country at present;

(b) what is the area of wasteland under the National Wastelands Development Board;

(c) whether the private sector is allowed to develop wasteland; and

(d) if so, the broad policy and the incentives available to the private sector for the purpose?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI Z. R. ANSARI): (a) A country-wide survey of all wastelands has not been carried out. According to an estimate, the total area of wastelands in the country is about 130 million hectares.

(b) The National Wastelands Development Board does not have any wastelands of its own.

(c) and (d) The specific steps taken to encourage the private sector in wastelands development through afforestation and tree planting are given below:

(i) To promote farm/agro-forestry on privately owned wastelands, free or subsidised supply of seedlings is being done and decentralised people's nurseries are being established. Loans at uniform rate of 10 per cent per annum are given by the banks, and 100 per cent refinance facility is provided to the banks by the National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development.